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# THE SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION IN IMPERIAL GERMANY: THE "FLOATING PROLETARIAT" THESIS RECONSIDERED

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ABSTRACT

This paper, a study of internal migration in Imperial Germany, challenges the thesis that the social consequences of urbanization were particularly disruptive for rural newcomers. Using published data from cities of destination, I show that much of the migration took place in stages via smaller cities, and that where families were involved, they were mostly those of the middle class. Moreover, the proportion of migrants in a given ward or occupation showed little relation to the incidence of social or economic dislocation there. All this suggests that migrants were more active participants than passive vitims in the proess of urbanization, which brought with it not only greater risks, but greater payoffs as well.

# THE SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION IN IMPERIAL GERMANY: THE "FLOATING PROLETARIAT" THESIS RECONSIDERED

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"How you gonna keep ´em down on the farm/ After they´ve seen Paree?" This was the earnest question posed by a humorous popular song from the time of the First World War. On the other hand, one of the dominant themes running through the whole genre of American country music is the fate of the hapless country boy or girl in the city. "Why did I leave from plowing the fields/ and look for a job in the town?" is a lament repeated time and again. As in the realm of popular culture, so also among social scientists the opinions on and explanations of rural-urban migration vary widely, though it appears the negative voices are in a majority. "The intellectual against the city" is a phenomenon at least as common in Germany as in the United States. Ironically, this is a point where the reactionary right of the late nineteenth century (decrying "flight from the land") and the new left of the postwar period (attacking the "alienation" of industrial capitalism) appear to be in full agreement: the rural migrant to the cities was uprooted, bereft of social ties, and tossed like a piece of driftwood by the unstable economic currents of the city.[1] Examples of individual fates fitting this description abound in the writings of contemporary social reformers and urban critics.



But it remains to be seen how representative such cases are and how much the experiences of rural newcomers differed from those of urbanites in general.

For a twentieth-century observer it is difficult to understand what attraction a city such as Berlin or New York or a Ruhr mining town such as Gelsenkirchen would have held for rural migrants. Housing statistics reveal an alarming degree of crowding by present-day standards. In 1875, for example, half of all Berlin households lived in flats with only one heated room besides the kitchen, with an average of four occupants. As late as 1910, 47 percent of all Berlin households, encompassing nearly 40 percent of the population, lived under such conditions. The average household size had declined somewhat in the course of a generation, but on the eve of the First World War one fifth of all Berlin households were burdened with boaders or roomers. In Gelsenkirchen, with the fastest growth rates in nineteenth century Germany, population density per square mile was somewhat lower than in Berlin, but the rates of crowding per room were even higher. In some places, beds were even rented out to boarders in shifts. New York probably represented the extreme of substandard housing conditions in America, but there were districts in the city where the population density surpassed that of Calcutta.[2]

When one contrasts such living conditions with present-day housing standards, it is almost inconceivable that rural migrants voluntarily subjected themselves to such a fate. One hypothesis would be that newcomers were ill-informed about urban living conditions and were misled by employers propaganda. What such an explanation

overlooks is that this and other types of migration were usually facilitated by social contacts. Rural immigrant settlements, "urban villages" in America, and coal towns in the German Ruhr were all characterized by the homogeneous regional origins of a large proportion of the migrants settling there, a consequence of chain migration. The reports of friends and relatives who had gone ahead continued to be the most trusted source of information from the big city or the New World. Furthermore, the volume of annual population turnover in cities of the late nineteenth century often reached eight or ten times the net population gain, suggesting that temporary and seasonal migration served as a preparatory stage to permanent settlement. The implications of all of this is that rural migrants were relatively well informed about the cities where they settled.[3] The naive greenhorn certainly existed but was not as common as is often assumed.

But if rural folks knew what they were getting into, why were so many of them willing to put up with urban living conditions? One must remember that their basis of comparison was not the suburban living conditions of postwar America, but the housing and working conditions of nineteenth-century rural Europe. One concrete example should suffice: not only were man and livestock housed under the same roof on the traditional North German farmstead, but the farmhands, instead of sharing living quarters with the family, slept on the loft above the horse stalls. The only source of heat was the warmth of the animals, which hardly brought the temperature more than ten degrees above that outside. Such conditions could make the worst tenament



look good. In addition, urban wages were usually much higher and working hours not any longer than those in the country. Servant girls in the cities had to put up with a lot of idiocyncracies if not indignities at the hands of the urban upper classes, but at least they were freed from milking cows. Even the most stringent mistress usually alowed one free afternoon per week, but milking was a twice-a-day, seven-days-a-week job if one had no substitute. The strength of the push-factor in different regions of Germany also depended somewhat on the rural social structure. Class divisions were especially crass in the regions east of the Elbe: on the one side the reactionary Junker elite, on the other the dependent rural laborers, and only a very small middle class to mediate. It was not only the wage differential which caused rural depopulation to be greatest in Eastern Germany: an agricultural laborer would be less sympathetic to an employer who passed out commands on horseback than to one who worked beside him in the fields.[4]

Still, the enormous attraction of the city cannot be explained in purely economic terms. Urban anonymity is without question a mixed blessing, but escape from the stifling social control of the village undoubtedly motivated many of the youthful migrants. Nor should the "bright lights" factor be overlooked: the broad array of entertainment if not culture which the city had to offer.[5] I recall my grandfather, the only one of seven children to remain on the home farmstead, saying somewhat reproachfully to his sister, "You just couldn't wait to get away from home and go to the city." Her reply: "I just couldn't wait to get out of the mud." In recent years, such

rural-urban migration has attracted increasing scholarly attention.

An influential article by Dieter Langewiesche focused the spotlight on internal migration in Imperial Germany.[6] Although Stephan Thernstrom regarded the high population turnover rates in nineteenth century Boston as proof of American restlessness, Langewiesche's work suggests that it was a nearly universal characteristic of urban society a century ago. But while the phenomenon of migration has been thoroughly studied, the social composition of the migrant stream has received little attention. High rates of population turnover are often regarded as prima facie evidence of uprootedness and the loss of social moorings or at least disillusionment with urban conditions. This need not be so, especially in the case of seasonal migrants, who from the outset planned on a temporary stay and a return to the homestead. A large proportion of urban migration in the nineteenth century fell in temporary and seasonal categories. For example, three fourths of the urban in-migrants in the district of Düsseldorf retained their previous, mostly rural, place of legal residence when they registered their arrival. The great majority of female domestic workers also belongs in the category of "circular migration." This was a relatively short phase in the life cycle, an opportunity to save money for a dowry or, less commonly, to supplement parental income. The situation was similar for many young men from the country who spent the summer in the city working on construction or at other unskilled labor, earning money to buy land or to supplement an inadequate income from agriculture. Langewiesche reports that during the summer, two-



thirds of all unemployed Germans were to be found in cities, while during the winter the same proportion lived in rural areas. Although this shows evidence of individual maladjustment, it also points to rational economic behavior on the part of migrants, who apparently sought to take advantage of both the higher earnings in the cities and the lower living costs in the country.[7]

It is apparent that the bulk of urban migration was composed of young and unmarried individuals, groups that could adjust most easily and incurred the least social costs. The heaviest social costs would ensue from family migration, especially in the case of families drifting from city to city, driven by want and unemployment. If, however, interurban family migration was dominated by the highly qualified, responding to the demand for specialized skills rather than to the specter of unemployment, then the overall social costs and dislocation accompanying urban migration were probably not as great as is commonly assumed.

The following paper attempts to analyze the social composition and social consequences of migration in the case of four major German cities: Berlin, Hamburg, Munich, and Frankfurt am Main. Since very little individual-level data on migrants is available, the analysis is based mostly on aggregate-level census material from the cities of destination. Two different approaches are used:

1. Using city-wide statistics that classify residents by regions and cities of origin, several social indicators were calculated: the intensity of migration relative to the source population, the proportion of women, and the proportion of children among in-

migrants according to place of origin.

2. Where subgroups, either occupational categories or city wards, were broken down between locally-born and in-migrants, ecological correlation was used to see which social characteristics were associated with high concentrations of migrants. The in-migrant proportion and migration turnover rates in various occupational groups were analyzed in their relation to occupational prestige and several occupation-specific measures of living standards and social instability. Similarly, city wards were used as units of aggregation to investigate how the social structure and living conditions of neighborhoods were influenced by the proportion of migrants in the population.

Ravenstein's familiar "Laws of Migration" have postulated a number of regularities in migratory behavior. One is that the intensity of migration decreases in proportion to distance; another is that the proportion of women among migrants is highest in short-distance migration and decreases over longer distances.[8] The present investigation has revealed several additional regularities in the contrast between rural-to-urban and city-to-city migration as well. Over a given distance, a city is usually more heavily represented than the surrounding rural area in the migration to another city. This is true even when migration rates are calculated relative to current population of areas of origin, although the population at risk, migrants born two or three decades earlier, was considerably smaller from fast growing cities than from stable rural areas. A second characteristic is that interurban migration contains a higher



proportion of women and children than does rural-urban migration. The higher proportion of women holds true also for the adult population, and is not merely due to the children, who are obviously about half female.

The data on migrants to Munich show that these general tendencies hold true also for migrants from smaller towns as well as from larger cities. The Bavarian statistics enumerated all unmittelbar (administratively independent) cities separately from the rest of the surrounding district. The census of 1871 showed two to four times as many people per capita from such towns residing in Munich as from adjacent rural areas. The town-to-city migration also included a higher proportion of women. These tendencies continued in 1890 as well, though they were not as pronounced. The 1890 census was the first to include information on cities outside Bavaria. Of twenty-one such cities, only seven showed a lower migration intensity or proportion of children in the migration to Munich than their rural surroundings, and six also showed a lower proportion of women. Some of these exceptions are more apparent than real, since a given city may have been located in the most distant corner of its respective province.[9]

For Frankfort am Main the only useful migration data is from 1905. Of twenty-seven separately enumerated cities of origin, only ten had lower migration rates and eleven showed fewer women among the migrants than the surrounding district. Five of the exceptions in each case came from the Rhine-Ruhr industrial area, which was located much farther from Frankfurt than the rural southern parts of Rhineland

and Westfalia.[10]

In the migration to Hamburg recorded in the 1890 census, only two of twenty-four cities of origin showed lower proportions of women migrants and only five had lower migration intensities than their rural hinterlands. Hamburg census officials were apparently underworked in 1895 and calculated the migration rates from every Prussian Kreis (county) into Hamburg. In general this simply confirmed the "law" that migrational gravity decreased with distance. Exceptions were found primarily in the East Elbian region and in districts that had especially good sea or inland shipping connections with Hamburg. These statistics also allow a look at the propensity to migrate from smaller towns, those which were administratively separate from the respective Landkreis. In thirty-four such cases there were only four where migration rates from the Landkreis (rural) exceeded that from the Stadtkreis (urban). Most of the towns also exceeded the province average in migration intensity, exceptions being found mainly in the areas near Hamburg, where the distance factor came into play. With the passing of time, the propensity to migrate appears to have evened out somewhat between persons of rural and urban birth. This can be observed in the Hamburg data from 1905, where twelve of thirty-three cities of origin had migration rates below the province average. This category included many fast growing cities in the Rhine-Ruhr industrial district and cities in the provinces bordering on Hamburg. The other two characteristics of interurban migration remained, however. Only five cities showed lower proportions of women, only two lower proportions of children among their migrants



than the surrounding rural areas.[11]

Similar tendencies can be observed in the migration to Berlin. By 1890 there was information for twenty-two cities of origin, only two of which showed a lower proportion of female migrants and only seven lower migration intensity than the surrounding province. As in the other cities treated above, the situation had changed somewhat by 1905 (Table 1, Columns 1-4). Twenty cities of origin with higher migration rates than their hinterlands stood in contrast to 15 with lower rates. In the latter category were most of the East Elbian cities, a number of rapidly growing industrial towns, and several that were located in the far corners of their respective provinces.[12] However, the proportion of women and children among interurban migrants was still generally greater than among newcomers from rural areas.

All these factors point in the same direction: that over a given distance, city-to-city migration would include a greater proportion of families than country-to-city migration. It remains an open question whether interurban migrants were also more highly qualified, but certain data constellations suggest this. Migration rates were generally higher out of multifunctional cities (such as Cologne) than from cities of heavy industry (such as those of the Ruhr). One would expect the opposite if city-to-city migration involved mostly the industrial proletariat. The proportion of women and children was generally higher among migrants from multifunctional cities, again suggesting older men with families and higher occupational qualifications. An additional explanation, not

Table 1: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS, INTENSITY OF MIGRATION, AND EXTENT OF MIGRATION BY STAGES AMONG IN-MIGRANTS TO BERLIN BY PLACE OF ORIGIN, 1905-1910

| C = CITY<br>R = REST OR RURAL<br>T = TOTAL STATE OR PROVINCE | In-Migrants by Birthplace 1905 | | | | In-Migrants by Last Residence 1910 | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % Children under 15 | Women/100 Men, all Migrants | Women/100 Men, Migrants Age 15+ | Migrants/10,000 Inhabitants | Migrants/10,000 Inhabitants | Change Rate, 1905-1910 (Col. 5 as % of Col. 4) | % Migrated Within Last 5 Years | % Migrated Direct from Birthplace | Women/100 Men, Direct Migrants | Women/100 Men, Indirect Migrants |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) | (8) | (9) | (10) |
| C. KOENIGSBERG | 10 | 115 | 116 | 414 | 615 | 163 | 28 | 41 | 131 | 110 |
| R. E.PRUSSIA | 3 | 129 | 129 | 504 | 330 | 66 | 26 | 56 | 173 | 117 |
| T. E.PRUSSIA | 7 | 127 | 122 | 494 | 364 | 75 | 26 | 53 | 166 | 115 |
| C. DANZIG | 10 | 126 | 128 | 444 | 620 | 149 | 29 | 43 | 145 | 95 |
| R. W.PRUSSIA | 5 | 124 | 125 | 506 | 384 | 79 | 30 | 55 | 159 | 116 |
| T. W.PRUSSIA | 6 | 124 | 125 | 500 | 408 | 85 | 29 | 53 | 157 | 112 |
| C. STETTIN | 17 | 122 | 125 | 533 | 1001 | 198 | 32 | 36 | 132 | 95 |
| R. POMMERANIA | 5 | 131 | 133 | 813 | 610 | 76 | 28 | 58 | 168 | 123 |
| T. POMMERANIA | 6 | 131 | 132 | 776 | 663 | 87 | 29 | 53 | 162 | 115 |
| C. POSEN | 10 | 111 | 114 | 500 | 778 | 178 | 28 | 38 | 127 | 95 |
| R. POSEN | 5 | 116 | 116 | 527 | 374 | 75 | 26 | 58 | 148 | 114 |
| T. POSEN | 5 | 115 | 116 | 525 | 404 | 81 | 26 | 55 | 146 | 110 |
| C. BRESLAU | 10 | 98 | 97 | 224 | 370 | 180 | 31 | 34 | 114 | 112 |
| R. SILESIA | 3 | 104 | 104 | 303 | 211 | 74 | 25 | 52 | 132 | 141 |
| T. SILESIA | 4 | 103 | 103 | 296 | 215 | 77 | 27 | 52 | 130 | 111 |
| C. MAGDEBURG | 13 | 102 | 103 | 228 | 338 | 157 | 36 | 34 | 108 | 77 |
| C. HALLE | 13 | 107 | 107 | 159 | 267 | 179 | 40 | 32 | 132 | 85 |
| R. PROV.SAXONY | 5 | 102 | 102 | 294 | 209 | 73 | 32 | 59 | 136 | 92 |
| T. PROV.SAXONY | 5 | 102 | 103 | 280 | 224 | 83 | 33 | 54 | 133 | 88 |
| C. ALTONA | 19 | 84 | 81 | 60 | 69 | 117 | 43 | 31 | 97 | 69 |
| C. KIEL | 26 | 99 | 95 | 42 | 138 | 381 | 55 | 14 | 89 | 41 |
| R. SCHLESWIG-H. | 9 | 68 | 65 | 48 | 42 | 94 | 49 | 32 | 76 | 59 |
| T. SCHLESWIG-H. | 12 | 73 | 69 | 49 | 57 | 127 | 50 | 26 | 81 | 53 |
| C. HANNOVER | 18 | 81 | 75 | 80 | 188 | 261 | 43 | 22 | 95 | 64 |
| R. HANNOVER | 7 | 64 | 62 | 49 | 41 | 90 | 49 | 39 | 77 | 56 |
| T. HANNOVER | 8 | 66 | 63 | 52 | 56 | 115 | 47 | 33 | 81 | 59 |
| C. DORTMUND | 19 | 64 | 53 | 31 | 68 | 268 | 53 | 21 | 80 | 44 |
| C. GELSENKIRCHEN | 24 | 73 | 48 | 6 | 28 | 533 | 67 | 19 | 50 | 42 |
| C. BOCHUM | 14 | 54 | 50 | 22 | 47 | 250 | 52 | 23 | 46 | 45 |
| R. WESTFALIA | 6 | 45 | 42 | 27 | 24 | 104 | 56 | 37 | 48 | 46 |
| T. WESTFALIA | 7 | 47 | 43 | 27 | 27 | 115 | 56 | 33 | 50 | 45 |
| C. KASSEL | 8 | 77 | 72 | 69 | 110 | 175 | 41 | 26 | 86 | 65 |
| C. FRANKFURT A.M. | 19 | 67 | 62 | 38 | 96 | 287 | 50 | 21 | 74 | 53 |
| C. WIESBADEN | 14 | 68 | 67 | 37 | 104 | 303 | 51 | 19 | 80 | 90 |
| R. HESSEN-NASSAU | 4 | 52 | 50 | 42 | 28 | 71 | 50 | 50 | 55 | 54 |
| T. HESSEN-NASSAU | 7 | 57 | 55 | 43 | 50 | 126 | 49 | 33 | 64 | 59 |
| C. DUESSELDORF | 21 | 75 | 73 | 29 | 72 | 290 | 55 | 20 | 76 | 47 |
| C. ESSEN | 16 | 60 | 55 | 20 | 47 | 285 | 60 | 19 | 68 | 45 |
| C. ELBERFELD | 11 | 71 | 69 | 48 | 71 | 154 | 47 | 33 | 55 | 69 |
| C. BARMEN | 7 | 51 | 47 | 33 | 39 | 130 | 48 | 39 | 61 | 56 |
| C. KREFELD | 9 | 59 | 54 | 46 | 45 | 102 | 45 | 50 | 59 | 62 |
| C. DUISBURG | 13 | 49 | 44 | 15 | 27 | 213 | 67 | 23 | 45 | 43 |
| C. COLOGNE | 18 | 76 | 70 | 41 | 82 | 224 | 49 | 23 | 77 | 52 |
| C. AACHEN | 9 | 71 | 67 | 32 | 43 | 141 | 45 | 35 | 53 | 61 |
| R. RHINELAND | 7 | 49 | 46 | 21 | 20 | 100 | 54 | 36 | 47 | 50 |
| T. RHINELAND | 10 | 55 | 51 | 25 | 31 | 140 | 53 | 31 | 55 | 51 |
| C. BRAUNSCHWEIG | 15 | 75 | 71 | 105 | 167 | 168 | 41 | 34 | 110 | 61 |
| R. BRAUNSCHWEIG | 6 | 64 | 63 | 75 | 58 | 77 | 50 | 47 | 95 | 90 |
| T. BRAUNSCHWEIG | 9 | 68 | 66 | 83 | 90 | 110 | 45 | 40 | 102 | 72 |
| C. DRESDEN | 19 | 80 | 75 | 72 | 177 | 261 | 42 | 25 | 91 | 67 |
| C. LEIPZIG | 17 | 83 | 80 | 88 | 185 | 230 | 39 | 25 | 95 | 65 |
| C. CHEMNITZ | 18 | 72 | 64 | 52 | 78 | 173 | 43 | 31 | 103 | 62 |
| C. PLAUEN I.V. | 8 | 54 | 51 | 40 | 73 | 210 | 48 | 38 | 81 | 84 |
| R. K.SAXONY | 7 | 60 | 58 | 51 | 36 | 75 | 42 | 41 | 89 | 72 |
| T. K.SAXONY | 11 | 67 | 64 | 58 | 74 | 136 | 41 | 31 | 91 | 68 |
| C. KARLSRUHE | 13 | 80 | 74 | 31 | 55 | 194 | 49 | 23 | 80 | 48 |
| C. MANNHEIM | 17 | 79 | 70 | 22 | 40 | 209 | 50 | 21 | 89 | 55 |
| R. BADEN | 6 | 53 | 51 | 16 | 14 | 94 | 49 | 32 | 69 | 42 |
| T. BADEN | 8 | 58 | 55 | 17 | 19 | 118 | 50 | 28 | 73 | 46 |
| C. STUTTGART | 13 | 50 | 46 | 28 | 41 | 164 | 55 | 27 | 50 | 39 |
| R. WURTTEMBERG | 4 | 42 | 40 | 16 | 9 | 56 | 52 | 43 | 56 | 34 |
| T. WURTTEMBERG | 6 | 43 | 41 | 17 | 12 | 76 | 53 | 37 | 54 | 36 |
| C. MUNICH | 18 | 78 | 73 | 19 | 50 | 295 | 56 | 23 | 90 | 48 |
| C. NUERNBERG | 12 | 50 | 48 | 18 | 37 | 233 | 55 | 26 | 62 | 45 |
| R. BAVARIA | 4 | 60 | 59 | 13 | 9 | 77 | 48 | 44 | 76 | 60 |
| T. BAVARIA | 6 | 61 | 59 | 14 | 14 | 107 | 51 | 35 | 77 | 53 |
| C. STRASSBURG | 18 | 67 | 63 | 27 | 74 | 289 | 44 | 16 | 85 | 39 |
| R. ALSACE-LORR. | 9 | 31 | 27 | 17 | 23 | 141 | 51 | 28 | 36 | 30 |
| T. ALSACE-LORR. | 10 | 35 | 30 | 18 | 28 | 161 | 49 | 25 | 41 | 32 |

incompatible with the above, would be migration by stages. Many of the children among the interurban migrants, and perhaps the women too, were the families of men born elsewhere who worked and founded a family in a smaller city before moving on to a larger one.

For a social historian it is usually frustrating when census officials alter their methods of enumeration; occasionally, however, this presents an opportunity for new insights. Such was the case in Berlin, where the censuses until 1905 enumerated in-migrants by place of birth, but in 1910 switched to place of last residence, further specified as to whether this was also the birthplace. This allowed a calculation of gains and losses of various cities and rural areas over the period 1905-1910, which yielded more conclusive evidence of migration by stages. The number of persons in the 1910 Berlin census with other cities as last places of residence was more than double the number in 1905 with other cities as birthplaces.[13] In the 1910 Berlin population there were fewer persons with last residence in rural areas than there were adoptive Berliners with rural birthplaces in 1905 (see Table 2). The relatively uniform percentages of recent arrivals from urban and rural areas show that there was no sudden boom in city-to-city migration that would account for these shifts. Rather, the implication is that many rural migrants made the trip to Berlin in two or more stages, first living in smaller cities. The same impression is gained by comparing the migration rates of individual cities and their rural surroundings in 1905 to 1910 (see Table 1, a more detailed presentation of information aggregated in Table 2). This high proportion of migration by stages means that rural migrants could

TABLE 2: MIGRATION TO BERLIN BY PLACE OF BIRTH AND LAST RESIDENCE, 1905-1910

| Unweighted | Migrants per 10,000 Inhabitants by Birthplace, 1905 (1) | Migrants per 10,000 Inhabitants by Last Residence, 1910 (2) | Average Change Rate (1910 as % of 1905) (3) | % Migrated Within Last 5 Years, 1910 (4) | % Migrated Direct from Birthplace 1910 (5) | Number of Cases |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. Cities | 104 | 178 | 221 | 46.2% | 28.1% | 35 |
| B. Rest (Rural) | 195 | 142 | 84 | 42.2 | 45.1 | 17 |
| C. Total (A + B) | 193 | 161 | 107 | 43.0 | 39.5 | 17 |
| Weighted by Population | | | | | | |
| A. Cities | 101 | 179 | 227 | 45.9 | 27.2 | |
| B. Rest (Rural) | 162 | 117 | 84 | 42.7 | 44.5 | |
| C. Total (A + B) | 153 | 127 | 109 | 43.3 | 38.6 | |

first gather experience in the quiet backwaters of provincial towns before venturing into the swift currents of the industrial metropolis. Thus culture shock was avoided or minimized, job experience gained, and the assimilation process to the urban way of life facilitated.

The proportion of migrants who came directly from their birthplace to Berlin was generally higher from the immediate hinterlands and other areas east of the Elbe, and lower over greater distances, especially from the west. More than half of all migrants from the Provinces of East and West Prussia, Pommerania, Posen, Silesia, and Saxony, and also from Mecklenburg, Thuringia, and Anhalt came directly from their birthplaces to Berlin. By contrast, the figures ranged from 31 to 33 percent for migrants from Hannover, Westfalia, Hesse-Nassau, the Rhine Province, the Kingdom of Saxony, and Hesse. The percentage of direct migrants was even lower from Schleswig-Holstein, Baden, and Alsace-Lorraine. The proportion of females, predominantly unskilled domestic workers, was also consistently higher in the direct than in the indirect migration from a given place of origin. All this strengthens the impression that migration by stages usually involved more highly qualified persons, and that interurban migration was motivated by factors other than material want. A more extensive testing of this thesis is made possible by census data on the urban labor force.

The most detailed occupational statistics for any German city are those for Berlin. Every five years, the census provided an enumeration of the labor force broken down according to nearly forty Prussian occupational categories, and further distinguished between



self-employed and employees. For each of these occupational groups, the proportion of native Berliners and in-migrants according to age groups and length of residence can be calculated. In addition, the census reported in 1895 the number receiving poor relief, and in 1900 it gave the average yearly housing costs for each occupational division. Since the census was taken in December, the low point of seasonal population fluctuations in the city, statistics on yearly migration turnover by occupation (unfortunately not broken down by employers and employees) provide important supplementary information for Berlin.[14]

According to Langewiesche's investigations, "in absolute numbers and in relation to their share of the population, laborers are most heavily represented among migrants, although no consistent and stringent association between the level of occupational qualification and the degree of mobility could be documented."[15] From the results of the present study, it is the lack of any stringent association which was most apparent. This is best shown by the example of the labor force in Berlin at the turn of the century. Although in nearly every occupational branch there were more new arrivals among the employees than among the self-employed (exceptions were mining and smelting, chemical industries, private transportation, and insurance), in another sense the self-employed were more mobile, for in most occupational groups they included a lower proportion of native Berliners than did the employees. This was true in both 1895 and 1900 in metalworking, machine, chemical, paper, and leather manufacturing, as well as in the woodworking, printing, clothing, and cleaning

industries, and in the branches of trade, insurance, hotels and restaurants, and the artistic crafts. In the textile and food and drink industries the differences were minimal, while only in the mining and smelting, quarrying and earthware, construction, and private transportation branches did the proportion of native Berliners increase with the level of occupational and social prestige. In the case of civil servants, mobility also increased with level of qualification, but this was more the result of transfers than of voluntary migration.

The 1900 census in Berlin also included information on the aggregate cost of housing for these occupational groups. Housing costs were computed for forty-two occupational groups in industry and trade (twenty-one branches subdivided into self-employed and employees) and correlated with the proportion of recent migrants: those arriving within the last year or five years. While the occupational groups with better housing quality tended to include fewer new arrivals, the association was very weak: no correlations higher than -0.25. Weighting according to the size of the occupational group in order to reduce the statistical influence of minor occupations, the correlation even shifted to positive, but was still weaker. Expressed in English, there was practically no tendency towards lower rents (i.e. poorer housing) among groups that included a high proportion of recent migrants. Furthermore, the proportion of native Berliners in an occupation showed no association with higher housing standards.[16] Among the groups with the cheapest (= poorest) housing were, as expected, casual laborers and railroad and



construction workers, but the quota of migrants in these occupations was hardly above the average for the whole labor force.

The censuses through 1900 only distinguished between self-employed and employees, lumping together blue and white collar workers in the latter category and occasionally producing some misleading results. Thus the tiny group of "mine and smelter workers" (in reality almost all office personnel and technicians) ranged among the upper 5 percent of all Berlin households, with yearly housing costs of ca. 1,000 Marks. In the 1905 enumeration the modern classification distinguishing between manual and non manual employees was adopted in the housing statistics. These were combined with information on birthplace from the 1907 Occupational Census. The percentage of households with yearly housing costs under 300 Marks was used as an indicator of living standard.[17] Among Berlin laborers in twenty occupational groups in industry and commerce, there was a tendency for migrants from rural and East Elbian areas to be more poorly housed, whereas migrants from other cities and the western provinces of Prussia and especially native Berliner were tendencially better off. But all correlations were relatively low, ranging between -0.22 and +0.33. Only in occupations with a high proportion of migrants from the agrarian East (East and West Prussia, Posen, Pommerania, and Silesia) was there a clear, if not overwhelming association (+0.49) with poor housing quality. Even here the strongest evidence is for the null hypothesis.

What could not be documented with housing costs was not to be confirmed by the welfare rolls either. The 1895 census in Berlin

recorded the number of persons in each occupational group receiving poor relief. This encompassed roughly 1 percent of the labor force, but since the self-employed showed a higher rate than the employees, it appears that support was given more readily to people with families. Within each of the two classes, the proportion on welfare corresponds rather well with occupational prestige. While a disproportionate concentration of both migrants and welfare cases were found among laborers in agriculture, gardening, and forestry, these were small groups, and not what one normally understands under the term "industrial proletariat." Except for the theatric profession, the highest welfare rates, namely 3 percent, were in the category of casual laborers (without further specification). Surprisingly, however, this occupational group included a smaller than average proportion of migrants. The only other groups with more than 2 percent on welfare were the self-employed in the clothing and textile industries and employees in the latter. But these groups also had low proportions of migrants. There were six other groups with more than 1 percent on poor relief. While the proportion of migrants was relatively high in four of these groups, it was extremely low among woodworkers and below average with construction workers.

One suspects, however, that many of those who had spent the summer in the city working construction or casual labor were warming themselves at the hearth of some farmhouse at census time in December. At any rate men of these occupations wintering in the city were generally older and more likely to be married than the average urban worker. Apparently many men without such ties left the city at the



onset of winter. Thus statistics of gross migration turnover are needed to supplement the net figures from the census in assessing the total impact of migration on various occupations. Figures from Berlin show that casual laborers (task unspecified) indeed had one of the highest turnover figures, but construction workers were somewhere near the average, with declining mobility over time (Table 3). In general, the turnover figures for industrial laborers ranged from average to low. The highest fluctuations were among domestic servants and casual laborers. The small group of "urban agricultural laborers" also showed a high turnover. But employees in service industries such as food and drink, cleaning, and hotel and restaurant were more mobile than the average industrial laborer. In spite of the much publicized, deplorable working conditions of textile laborers, their propensity to migrate was extremely low, and also in the clothing industry it was below average. Thus it does not appear that in general low rates of net in-migration were masking high rates of gross turnover in undesirable occupations.[18]

According to conventional wisdom, women have a lower propensity to migrate than men, but the aggregate figures here show higher rates for the female labor force than for the male (Table 3a). Broken down by the occupations in which women were most numerous, it quickly becomes apparent why: female mobility figures run consistently parallel to those of men in the same occupation, only slightly lower. For domestics servants of both sexes, turnover is extremely high, for clothing workers, extremely low. It is only the high proportion of domestics in the total female labor force which accounts for the high aggregate mobility.

Table 3: AVERAGE YEARLY MIGRATION TURNOVER PER 100 OF MALES EMPLOYED IN VARIOUS OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS IN BERLIN

| | 1886-1890 | 1891-1895 | 1896-1900 | 1901-1905 | 1906-1910 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishery | 106 | 73 | 58 | 59 | 52 |
| Mining, Quarrying | 32 | 41 | 38 | 42 | 36 |
| Metalworking | 40 | 24 | 26 | 25 | 27 |
| Machines and Instruments | 21 | 14 | 14 | 17 | 14 |
| Chemicals, Heating and Lighting | 26 | 17 | 13 | 16 | 16 |
| Textiles | 20 | 14 | 10 | 10 | 11 |
| Paper and Leather | 29 | 22 | 20 | 19 | 19 |
| Woodworking | 24 | 20 | 19 | 20 | 22 |
| Foods and Drinks | 61 | 53 | 53 | 55 | 50 |
| Clothing | 32 | 26 | 22 | 19 | 18 |
| Cleaning | | | 55 | 54 | 48 |
| Construction | 65 | 37 | 30 | 33 | 30 |
| Printing and Artistic Trades | 25[a] | 23[a] | 23 | 21 | 22 |
| Trade and Insurance | 28 | 26 | 26 | 31 | 31 |
| Transport | 18 | 6 | 8 | 11 | 9 |
| Hotel, Restaurant | 42 | 39 | 39 | 40 | 40 |
| Theater | | | 141 | 148 | 54 |
| Domestic and Personal Service | 52 | 72 | 143 | 146 | 267 |
| Unspecified Labor | 37 | 56 | 266[b] | 89 | 74 |
| Railroad and Postal | | | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| Medicine | 68 | 41 | 57 | 70 | 54 |
| Teaching | | | 25 | 28 | 53 |
| Fine Arts | 70 | 81 | 101 | 86 | 153 |
| Literature and Press | | | 30 | 33 | 47 |
| Church | | | 26 | 73 | 70 |
| Higher Civil Servants | 14 | 14 | 66 | 107 | 39 |
| Lower Civil Servants | | | 16 | 24 | |
| Military | 6 | 4 | 4 | 7 | 7 |
| Renters Pensioners | 12 | 10 | 9 | 23 | 16 |
| In Study or Training | 133 | 129 | 121 | 261 | 240 |
| No Occupation or Information | 86 | 21 | 24 | 35 | 38 |
| Total Male Labor Force | 35 | 31 | 33 | 33 | 33 |

[a]Including Theater

[b]The high figure here reflects not a greater number of migrants--this remains nearly constant over the next decade--but rather a lower number employed in this category, brought about either by the economic cycle or by changing census definitions.

Table 3a: SELECTED OCCUPATIONS IN BERLIN, BREAKDOWN BY SEX

| | | 86-90 | 91-95 | 96-00 | 01-05 | 06-10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total Labor Force | M | 35 | 31 | 33 | 33 | 33 |
| | F | 41 | 41 | 42 | 42 | 39 |
| Domestic and Personal Service | M | 52 | 72 | 143 | 146 | 267 |
| | F | 72 | 75 | 90 | 94 | 101 |
| Clothing | M | 32 | 26 | 22 | 19 | 18 |
| | F | 9[a] | 9[a] | 11 | 13 | 13 |

[a]Includes Cleaning

Data from Frankfurt am Main cited by Langewiesche show the highest mobility for persons in the lowest income and tax brackets. This is not surprising, for migrants were concentrated in the age groups from 20 to 35 and were just beginning their careers. But this was true for bourgeoisie groups as well as industrial laborers, and for people in service industries as well. Migration was not a purely proletarian phenomenon. Other data from Frankfurt allow one to study intraurban mobility and to investigate whether this form of migration took the place of long-distance moves for displaced lower class families. The frequency of local moves, specified by occupation but not between employers and employees, does show a moderate tendency toward higher mobility for groups lower down on the social scale (Table 4). Civil servants, teachers, and professionals were twice as residentially stable as workers in the wood, metal, or construction industries. The peak of mobility, however, was found not among industrial laborers, but among workers in the food industry. Even a trade such as printing, which was relatively high in skill and prestige, brought relatively little residential stability. On the other hand, an unquestionably lower class group, the clothing and cleaning trades, showed high residential stability. One possible explanation is the high proportion of female-headed families in the latter categories, since women generally had a lower propensity to move than men. This would, however, further weaken the assertion that the socially disadvantaged were driven to change residence frequently. On the ward basis, too, there was hardly any association between high population turnover and working class districts in Frankfurt in 1890; the sign of the correlation was positive, but it was very low (+0.26).

Table 4: FREQUENCY OF LOCAL MOVES OF HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD BY OCCUPATION, FRANKFURT AM MAIN, 1890-92

| | Household Heads 1890 Census | % Moved 1891-1892 |
|---|---|---|
| Agriculture, Gardening Fishery | 705 | 28.1% |
| Mining, Quarrying, Metalworking | 1836 | 62.7 |
| Textile, Paper and Leather Industry | 758 | 56.6 |
| Woodworking Industry | 1260 | 62.7 |
| Food and Drink Industry | 859 | 53.3 |
| Clothing and Cleaning Industry | 6011 | 27.7 |
| Building Trades | 1760 | 60.3 |
| Printing Trades | 564 | 58.0 |
| Commerce of all Types | 7729 | 37.6 |
| Hotels and Gastronomy (esp. Inkeepers, Cooks, Waiters) | 1058 | 67.0 |
| Domestic Service and Casual Labor | 2144 | 51.1 |
| Civil Servants, Office Personnel, and Teachers of all Kinds | 3980 | 36.2 |
| Laborers and Day Laborers without further Specification | 2826 | 62.4 |
| Free Professions | 839 | 33.6 |
| All Heads of Households | 36984 | 43.7 |
| Male Only | 29930 | 51.6 |
| Female Only | 7054 | 21.9 |

Short-term residence (under a year) was in fact more characteristic for upper class than for working class districts, and reflected more the pull of attractive new housing than the push of catastrophic circumstances.[19]

Using city wards instead of occupational groups as the basis of aggregation, there is still not much association between high concentrations of migrants and poor living conditions. An analysis of this sort makes sense only if the sexes are treated separately; since so many women migrants were domestic servants, they would be associated with upper-class districts even though their personal status was at the opposite end of the social scale. But even male migrants show practically no association with districts of substandard living conditions. Ward data from Berlin was analyzed in three cross-sections from 1875, 1890, and 1910, using various indicators of housing costs, apartment size, residential crowding, and data on the occupational and demographic structure (Table 5). The various indicies of substandard housing were closely correlated with one another and with working class and industrial districts, but were if anything negatively correlated with the proportion of male migrants within the population. Even when using as an indicator the proportion of men with fewer than five years of residence, the correlations are negative with laborers and industry and positive with tradesmen and professionals for the years 1890 and 1910. Such new arrivals were also more likely to be better situated roomers (Zimmermieter) than borders who only had a place to sleep (Schlafganger). In 1875 migrants were nearly insignificant as a neighborhood characteristic: the proportion of migrants showed no significant negative or positive



correlation with any other social or economic indicator. If one uses the proportion of migrants from agrarian East Elbia as a variable in the 1890 data set, the associations with positive indicators disappear, but they are not replaced by any close correlations with the negative ones. In contrast, the presence of migrants from the western provinces of Prussia was a good indicator for a "better" neighborhood. These findings for Berlin are confirmed and even strengthened by data from Munich. The long-distance migration (from outside Bavaria) in particular appears to have been one of quality and specialized skills. Corroborating evidence from Munich in 1905 (not included in the table) also shows that a high proportion of migrants in a given ward corresponded with a low incidence of such indicators of social maladjustment as poor-relief cases or infant and adult mortality. This much is clear: a high concentration of migrants was by no means equivalent with the development of slum conditions in Berlin or Munich.[20]

Another interesting feature of German internal migration is that (with the exception of the Polish colonies in the Ruhr) it produced relatively little residential segregation. This contrasts sharply with the Gastarbeiter (foreign worker) situation in present-day Germany and the immigrant ghettos in nineteenth century American cities, and was without a doubt a great aid in the assimilation process. Census figures attest to the relatively even distribution of migrants across the city. According to Berlin folklore, the Silesians made up the bulk of the city's casual laborers and formed a ghetto near the end station of the Silesian railroad line. And census figures reveal that the highest concentration of Silesians was indeed

Table 5: WARD-LEVEL CORRELATIONS BETWEEN THE PERCENTAGE OF MIGRANTS IN THE MALE POPULATION AND INDICATORS OF SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND LIVING STANDARDS

| Independent Variable: proportion of various categories of migrants among male ward population | | Dependent Variables | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | % of labor force | | | % of population | | | |
| | | Average Number Rooms Per Family | Laborers | in Industry | in Trade and Transportation | in Professions & Civil Service | Domestic Servants | Roomers | Boarders | N of cases |
| Berlin 1875 | in-migrant within last 5 years | -.20 | | -.10 | -.04 | -.11 | -.17 | +.39 | +.27 | 27 |
| Berlin 1890 | in-migrant within last 5 years | +.46 | -.62 | -.57 | +.24 | +.67 | +.46 | +.73 | -.27 | 22 |
| Berlin 1890 | in-migrant from Pommerania, Posen, Silesia E. & W. Prussia | -.19 | +.09 | +.15 | +.18 | -.09 | -.21 | +.29 | +.51 | 22 |
| Berlin 1890 | in-migrant from Western Provinces of Prussia | +.80 | -.82 | -.81 | +.36 | +.81 | +.79 | +.77 | -.46 | 22 |
| Berlin 1910 | in-migrant within last 5 years | +.40 | -.54 | -.71 | +.68 | +.54 | +.30 | +.58 | -.14 | 31 |
| Munich 1890 | in-migrant within last 5 years | +.58 | -.47 | -.54 | +.27 | -.03 | +.33 | | | 22 |
| Munich 1890 | all in-migrants | +.15 | -.24 | -.28 | -.17 | -.31 | +.02 | | | 22 |
| Munich 1890 | in-migrant from outside Bavaria | +.91 | -.77 | -.78 | +.46 | +.60 | +.72 | | | 22 |

found in this ward. However, the number there was only one third higher than would be produced by a uniform distribution throughout the city, hardly what one would term an immigrant ghetto. In the remaining wards, the variations were very small, ranging between 83 and 120 percent of a uniform distribution for Silesians. In no ward did the index for any East Elbian province fall below 68 or exceed 155, giving the impression of only minimal segregation. Even with a group as small as the Mecklenburgers, less than 1 percent of the Berlin population, and a poorly qualified rural group if ever there was one, all index figures fell between 71 and 166, with thirteen of the twenty-two within the narrow band beween 80 and 120. And the pattern in Hamburg was similar. By contrast, the index of representation for Mecklenburgers among all Germans in entire cities and states of the United States ranged as high as 300 and as low as 5. This only serves to underscore how minimal the extent of segregation was in German cities.[21]

For the most part, evidence presented here has been of an aggregate nature, but there are several instances in Berlin near the end of the nineteenth century where census takers actually crosstabulated some social indicators by place of birth. The dissolution of the family, pauperism, and criminality were among the signs of social disruption which cultural pessimists professed to see as the consequences of urbanization and migration. It is precisely in this area that some individual-level statistics are available. In 1885 divorced and separated or abandoned wives were classified as to native Berliners and in-migrants. In relation to the total number of each group married, separation and abandonment rates were practically



the same regardless of geographic origin, and divorce rates noticeably higher for Berliners (Table 6). Thus the total rates of marital dissolution were higher for those who grew up to urban life than for those new to it. Among migrants, rates were no higher for newcomers to the city than for long-term residents, being lowest with intermediate duration. Perhaps this is because divorce is to some extent cumulative: chances for remarriage decrease with age. But at any rate there is little evidence of any disruptive effects of migration.[22]

In 1895 Berlin census officials tabulated poor relief and criminality figures according to birthplace, also specifying to some extent the regional origins of migrants. Once again there is little evidence of "rural virtue" being corrupted, especially in the case of males. When percentaged in relation to the labor force, poor-relief rates are slightly lower for migrant men; in relation to the total male population above the age 15, somewhat lower for Berliners, but in either case the differences are not substantial (Table 7). The rate for Berlin women was only three-fourths that for female migrants to the city, but also here there is no sign of wholesale social dissolution. The criminality statistics follow similar patterns. Migrant men even had slightly lower rates than native Berliners in relation to the "population at risk," those over 12 years of age (Table 8). Berlin women, on the other hand, were only three-quarters as likely to be incarcerated as migrants.[23]

These statistics also permit some comparisons of migrants by broad regional groupings. For both sexes but especially with men, variation in criminality and poor relief rates parallel one another by

Table 6: RATES OF MARITAL DISSOLUTION BY BIRTHPLACE AND LENGTH OF RESIDENCE: FEMALE RESIDENTS OF BERLIN, 1885

| | Divorced | Separated or Abandoned | Total Divorced, Separated, Abandoned |
|---|---|---|---|
| Berlin Born | 2.83% | 2.21% | 5.05% |
| All In-migrants | 2.80 | 1.59 | 4.39 |
| In-migrant 1881-1885 | 3.17 | 1.77 | 4.94 |
| In-migrant 1871-1880 | 2.34 | 1.21 | 3.56 |
| In-migrant before 1871 | 3.11 | 1.88 | 4.99 |

Table 7: RATES OF INCARCERATION FOR CRIME IN RELATION TO TOTAL PERSONS OF PUNISHABLE AGE BY BIRTHPLACE AND SEX: BERLIN RESIDENTS, 1895

| | Berlin born | In-migrants |
|---|---|---|
| Men | 5.49% | 5.43% |
| Women | 1.49 | 1.94 |

Table 8: RATES OF POOR RELIEF BY BIRTHPLACE AND SEX: ADULT BERLIN RESIDENTS, 1895

| | Berlin Born | In-migrants |
|---|---|---|
| Proportion of males receiving poor relief in relation to male labor force | 1.66% | 1.41% |
| Proportion of males receiving poor relief in relation to male population over age 15 | 1.33 | 1.40 |
| Proportion of females receiving poor relief in relation to female population over age 15 | 2.54 | 3.47 |

region of origin (Table 9). Rates are low among people from surrounding suburbs, highest among those from the next zone of distance, and in general higher from eastern than from western parts of Prussia. Criminality rates were broken down further in the source, and revealed the highest rates from the Frankfurt/Oder District of Brandenburg and from the Province of Posen. Rates were also higher among migrants from the Province of Saxony than in the other western provinces, and higher among natives of the Kingdom of Saxony than from non-Prussian parts of Germany generally. Thus it appears that long-distance migrants adjusted better to urban life than those who traveled shorter distances, though in part this was a west/east and urban/rural contrast as well. However, perhaps the most striking feature of the regional variations is that they are not that dramatic.

The evidence presented above was drawn from only a few cities, much of it restricted to Berlin, a teeming metropolis of staggering growth rates that prompted Mark Twain's sobriquet "the German Chicago." But the migration patterns uncovered here were apparently more the rule than the exception, as material from the 1907 Occupational Census for all cities with over 100,000 inhabitants in the German Reich demonstrates. A crosstabulation of birthplace and occupation shows that a much smaller proportion of business owners and top managers were locally born than was the case with their laborers and office personnel (Table 10). Even more astonishing, the captains of industry were just as rural in their origins as the manual laborers they employed. An even higher proportions of rural-born was to be found among leaders of commerce and among schoolteachers, the latter falling under civil service. Most rural in their origins were workers



in trade and transportation and casual laborers, but this is practically the only piece of evidence supporting the immiseration thesis. By contrast, interurban migration seems to have been the domain of the new middle class. A much higher proportion of white collar workers had been born in other cities than was the case with either businessmen or laborers. The highest rates in this category resulted from the enforced mobility of higher civil servants. The overall impression gained here is of the complexity of the phenomenon migration, and the oversimplification inherent in a slogan such as "floating proletariat."[24]

The fate of the rural migrant in the industrial city is still not an open and shut case. Most of evidence presented here captures the migrant only indirectly or in highly aggregated groups, so that the distorting effects of the ecological fallacy might have been in play. Moreover, most of the evidence has been of a negative nature: expected evidence of social dislocation among migrants did not show up. Nevertheless, as Sherlock Holmes recognized many years ago, the fact that the dog did not bark proved to be a key observation. But to construct a more differentiated profile of the urban migrant, more research is needed for cities of various economic types, especially using migrant registration lists in comparison with census data of the resident urban population. The few case studies of this sort which have been completed strengthen the findings of the above study.

American scholars have pioneered in individual-level investigations of social and economic mobility, in part thanks to their excellent source material. In spite of the many new insights offered, the objection always remains that they are restricted to one

Table 9: RATES OF CRIMINALITY AND POOR RELIEF BY SEX AND REGION OF ORIGIN: BERLIN RESIDENTS, 1895

| | Male Criminality* | Male Poor Relief* | Female Criminality* | Female Poor Relief* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Charlottenburg | 3.65% | 1.42% | 2.29% | 1.99% |
| Kreis Teltow | 4.76 | 1.29 | 1.94 | 3.13 |
| Kreis Niederbarmen | 5.03 | 1.58 | 1.79 | 3.19 |
| Rest of Province Brandenburg | 5.76 | 1.71 | 2.41 | 3.83 |
| Provinces Pommerania, Posen, Silesia E. and W. Prussia, | 5.66 | 1.35 | 2.23 | 2.99 |
| Provinces Saxony, Schleswig-Holstein, Westfalia, Rhineland Hannover, Hessen-Nassau | 3.96 | 1.09 | 2.01 | 3.06 |
| German Reich excluding Prussia | 3.80 | 0.81 | 1.76 | 2.73 |
| Countries outside German Reich | 1.61 | 0.40 | 0.71 | 0.67 |

*Whereas Table 7 and 8 excluded children when calculating per-capita rates, it was necessary to include them here since the census provided no breakdown on age by region of origin. This apparently introduced no serious regional bias, but did preclude comparison with native Berliners, where the proportion of children was much higher than among migrants.

Table 10: BIRTHPLACE OF MALE LABOR FORCE BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY IN GERMAN CITIES OF OVER 100,000 POPULATION, 1907

| | | city of current residence | other towns of 2000 + inhabitants | rural communities of under 2000 inhabitants | N |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| B: Industry including Mining and Construction | a[1] | 25.2% | 37.0% | 37.8% | 287,845 |
| | b[2] | 31.8 | 44.0 | 24.2 | 207,813 |
| | c[3] | 31.3 | 31.1 | 37.7 | 1,575,171 |
| C: Trade and Transportation including Gastronomy | a[1] | 22.5 | 38.2 | 39.3 | 237,727 |
| | b[2] | 32.0 | 43.3 | 24.7 | 219,724 |
| | c[3] | 26.3 | 29.5 | 44.3 | 537,294 |
| $D_2$: Casual Labor of varying types | | 28.0 | 26.3 | 45.7 | 53,115 |
| $E_2$: National, State and Local Government and Administration | a[4] | 23.0 | 54.9 | 22.1 | 18,728 |
| | b[5] | 24.2 | 39.4 | 36.8 | 89,505 |
| | c[6] | 17.5 | 29.4 | 53.1 | 20,810 |
| $E_4$: Education and Instruction | a[7] | 16.1 | 42.1 | 41.8 | 38,156 |
| | b[8] | 23.6 | 45.8 | 30.6 | 1,465 |
| | c[9] | 17.9 | 28.9 | 53.2 | 4,220 |

[1] Owner or partner, leasee, top executives and managers
[2] Technically trained supervisory personnel, trained administrative, office, and bookkeeping personnel, including trainees
[3] Other helpers, trainees, factory, wage or day laborers, assisting family members
[4] Higher civil servants, Lawyers, Notaries
[5] Other administrative, supervisory, and office personnel
[6] Service workers
[7] Directors and Teachers
[8] Administrative personnel
[9] Service workers including those in institutions.

city and the minority of its population which remained geographically stable over a decade. Thus a nagging suspicion persists that such studies give a misleadingly optimistic view of social mobility, because the downwardly mobile were overrepresented among the outmigrants. A recent research project has overcome this obstacle by using a phonetic census register to trace a sample group throughout the entire United States over a period of five years. In the words of the authors, their study shows that "migration was neither so great, nor so disruptive, as previous historians have suggested." This study "refutes the view that migration was positively correlated to low occupational achievement."[25]

Skeptics might ask what this has to do with European migration; factors such as transoceanic migration and the settlement of a thinly populated continent may have made America unique. But on the European side a Scandinavian scholar has come up with similar results in a study tracing 700 men throughout Sweden from their 21st through their 39th year of life. The Swedish parish records utilized were so complete that just 6.4 percent of the sample was lost. Only one-third of these men remained at their original place of residence, and these were generally the less successful: "Geographically mobile persons evidently had more than twice as many opportunities for improving their occupational position in a decisive fashion as compared with persons who were highly stationary." In addition, there was a tendency for greater occupational progress among people who migrated longer distances.[26] Moreover, this study also casts doubt on the assumption that rural in-migrants were at any great disadvantage on the urban labor market.



Individual-level data of the type used in American or Scandinavian mobility studies is not generally available for Germany. But James Jackson's recently completed investigation of the city of Duisburg, using migration registers and some of the rare surviving German census manuscripts, offers some important insights into migration patterns in a center of heavy industry where the disorienting effects of rapid urbanization should have been most severe. "For Duisburg, at least, those consequences did not materialize," observes Jackson in the conclusion of his chapter entitled "The Myth of Marginality." "Migrants behaved in ways that indicated stability and the persistence of intimate social ties." Among other things, Jackson brings further support for the thesis that migrants accompanied by dependent families tended to be more highly qualfied. In both 1867 and 1890 migrant families of rural background were more likely to settle permanently in Duisburg than those of urban origins, and the latter were not simply driven by want and unemployment. Families of skilled workers showed consistently lower persistence rates than those of unskilled workers.[27]

If the chances for rural migrants were this good in the industrial Moloch of the Ruhr, they were probably no worse for newcomers in smaller cities or those with more diversified economies. This is confirmed by a study of migration in a northwest German provincial capital, Münster. Especially interesting are the findings on the "highly mobile," persons who came to the city from a place other than their birthplace and continued on to yet a fourth location upon leaving. The bulk of the migrants in this category fell into two highly divergent types: on the one hand a bottom strata of casual

laborers who drifted from job to job in the city and surrounding countryside. Such drifters were usually unmarried and with few social attachments of any kind, and continued their wanderings throughout their life span. On the other hand, even more heavily represented among the "highly mobile" were the highly qualified, especially skilled artisans, but also including people in administrative jobs or civil service. These groups traveled great distances, often came from large cities, and even more frequently went on to large cities upon leaving Münster. Family migration among the highly mobile was primarily restricted to the second type. Thus the families most affected by migration were those with the resurces to cope with it. Once more this study confirms that urban migration did not necessarily mean social disintegration.[28]

Even if it could be demonstrated that the majority of the "down and out" in industrializing cities were people of rural origin (and it is doubtful whether this was the case), that would still not mean that the majority of rural in-migrants were condemned to proletarization in the cities. The rapid urbanization of the previous century undoubtedly involved heavy social costs, but from the findings of this study it appears questionable that a disproportionate share of these costs were borne by rural migrants. Individual cases of hardship have been documented often enough in the literature, but they were only half the story. The city presented not only higher risks, but higher payoffs as well.

One of the tasks for further research will be to investigate why rural migrants fared so comparatively well in urban environments. Scandinavian researchers have postulated selectivity of migration,



albeit on the basis of a rather meager data base. William Sewell in his study of social mobility in nineteenth-century Marsailles speculates that a class solidarity rooted in artisan tradition was more important to urban workers than social mobility. This more than any background handicaps caused them to be outperformed by rural in-migrants. In the German case it may be worthwhile to examine the quality of education and the extent to which it was accessible to the lower classes in rural and urban surroundings. The rural lower class may have benefitted from the fact that alternatives to public education were fewer and more expensive in the country than in the city. Greater class segregation may have caused the quality of public education in urban areas to suffer. These are all tentative hypotheses which require further exploration. But it should be clear from the evidence above that more satisfactory explanations of migration will come only when researchers abandon old bugaboos and take up new approaches to research which recognize migrants not merely as passive victims but as active participants in the urbanization process.

FOOTNOTES

1. An overview of the Landflucht literature is provided by Klaus Bergmann, Agrarromantik und Grossstadtfeindschaft (Meisenheim, 1970). A good example of the anti-urban bias in the recent literature is Lutz Niethammer and Franz Brüggemeier, "Wie wohnten Arbeiter im Kaiserreich?" Archiv für Sozialgeschichte 16 (1976), pp. 61-134. The dominant assumption throughout the article is that migration and immiseration went hand in hand, as the following citation from the conclusion illustrates: "In the area of housing there was a great difference between the mobile, especially recent in-migrants, who floundered about between subsistence and industrial discipline, and the `arrived´ among the laborers."

2. Investigations of housing conditions in Berlin and much of the research presented here were conducted in the project "Wohnungsnot und Soziale Frage im 19. Jahrhundert" supported by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft at Sonderforschungsbereich 164, Teilprojekt B 5 in Münster. Preliminary results were presented by project leader H. J. Teuteberg and C. Wischermann, "The Housing Question in Late 19th Century Germany: A Contribution to Quantitative Urban Social History" (paper delivered at the North-West Forum of Economic and Social History, Manchester, 7 December 1979). See also C. Wischermann, "Wohnungsnot und Städtewachstum: Standards und soziale Indikatoren städtischer Wohnungsversorgung im späten 19. Jahrhundert," in Werner Conze and Ulrich Engelhardt, eds.,



Arbeiter im Industrialisierungsprozess: Herkunft, Lage und Verhalten (Stuttgart, 1979), pp. 201-26, for a classification of cities according to housing quality. On housing conditions in the Ruhr see Niethammer and Brüggemann, "Arbeiter im Kaiserreich," pp. 89-107. On New York see Peter Marcuse, "Housing and Early City Planning," Journal of Urban History 6 (February 1980), pp. 153ff.

3. Steve Hochstadt, "Migration and Industrialization in Germany, 1815-1977," Social Science History 5 (1981), pp. 445-459; Dieter Langewiesche, "Wanderungsbewegung in der Hochindustrialisierungsperiode: Regionale, interstädtische und innerstädtische Mobilität in Deutschland 1880-1914," Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte 64 (1977), pp. 1-40; Allen R. Newmann, "The Influence of Family and Friends on German Internal Migration, 1880-85," Journal of Social History 13 (1979), pp. 277-288. On chain migration among German immigrants in America see Walter Kamphoefner, "Transplanted Villages: Regional Distribution and Patterns of Settlement of Germans in America to 1870," (paper delivered at the SSHA Meeting, Cambridge, Mass., November 1979).

4. Hermann Kaiser, Herdfeuer und Herdgerät im Rauchhaus: Wohnen damals (Cloppenburg, 1980), pp. 32-37; and Dieter Sauermann, Knechte und Mägde in Westfalen um 1900 (Münster, 1972); "Das Verhältnis von Bauernfamilie und Gesinde in Westfalen," Niedersächsisches Jahrbuch 50 (1978), pp. 27-44; Niethammer and Brüggemann, "Arbeiter im Kaiserreich," p. 67 note 30. It is

often argued that paternalistic relationships provided security for the agricultural laborers on East Elbian estates. This argument strikes an American ear as unconvincing, and shows a suspicious similarity with the assertions of the white elite in the South: "'My' Negroes have it good and would be content to stay working for me if it just wasn't for those outside agitators." For a comparison of these two reactionary rural elites see Shearer Davis Bowman, "Antebellum Planters and Vormärz Junkers in Comparative Perspective," American Historical Review 85 (1980), pp. 779-808. Even in Western Germany the common interests of landowners and agricultural laborers was rather limited, as the above cited studies by Sauerman show.

5. One of the few studies that has taken this aspect into consideration is Hsi-Huey Liang, "Lower-Class Immigrants in Wilhelmine Berlin," Central European History 3 (1970), pp. 94-111. As he points out, not even the class-conscious "Vorwärts" could do without advertisements for dance halls.

6. Langewiesche, "Wanderungsbewegung," pp. 1-40; and "Mobilität in deutschen Mittel- und Grossstädten: Aspekte der Binnenwanderung im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert," in Conze and Engelhardt, eds., Arbeiter im Industrialisierungsprozess, pp. 70-93. Langewiesche takes up a field of research that had lain nearly fallow since the important early work of Rudolf Heberle and Fritz Meyer, Die Grossstädte im Strome der Binnenwanderung (Leipzig, 1937). In the intervening decades Wolfgang Köllmann was one of the few



scholars working in this area, though with a strong demographic emphasis. For a collection of his most important articles see Wolfgang Köllmann, Bevölkerung in der industriellen Revolution (Göttingen, 1974).

7. Hochstadt, "Migration and Industrialization," p. 459, he stresses the significance of "circulatory migration" in urban areas. After 1865 such statistics were no longer collected in the Düsseldorf administrative district. Langewiesche, "Wanderungsbewegung," p. 23.

8. Ravenstein, "The Laws of Migration," Journal of the Statistical Society 48 (1885), pp. 167-227; 52 (1889), pp. 241-301.

9. The "unmittelbar" cities in Bavaria included some communities that were much smaller than Prussian "kreisfrei" cities, including several with fewer than 4,000 inhabitants. Source of data: Beitr. zur Statistik des Kgr. Bayern 32 (Munich 1876); Mittheilungen des Statistischen Amtes der Stadt München 13, part 1-2, pp. $68^{+}$-$69^{+}$.

10. Source of data: Beitr.zur Statistik der Stadt Frankfurt a.M., n.s. vol. 8 (1908), pp. 35-37.

11. Source of data: Statistik des Hamburgischen Staates 16 (1894), pp. 32-43; 19 (1900), pp. 75-78; 24 (1909), pp. 40 ff.

12. Source of data: Die Bevölkerungs-, Gewerbe- und Wohnungs-Aufnahme vom 1.Dezember 1875 in der Stadt Berlin, part 3-4 (1880), pp. $27^{+}$-$29^{+}$; Die Bevölkerungs-, Gewerbe- und Wohnungs-Aufnahme vom

1.Dezember 1890 in der Stadt Berlin, part 1 (1893), pp. 34-43; Die Grundstücks-Aufnahme von Ende Oktober 1905 sowie die Wohnungs- und die Bevölkerungs-Aufnahme vom 1.Dezember 1905 in der Stadt Berlin und 29 benachbarten Gemeinden, part 2, (1911), pp. 32-35.

13. Data for 1910: Die Grundstücks-Aufnahme vom 15.Oktober 1910 sowie die Wohnungs- und die Bevölkerungs-Aufnahme vom 1. Dezember 1910 in der Stadt Berlin und 44 Nachbargemeinden, part 1, no. 3 (1916), pp. 32-37. The migration intensity in relation to the 1905 and 1910 population respectively was calculated for all cities that were separately enumerated in both years in the Berlin statistics. Other cities were added to the remanent or rural population of their respective state or province.

14. Source of data: Die Berliner Volkszählung von 1895, part 2, (1899), pp. 78-79; Die Berliner Volkszählung von 1900, part 2, (1904), pp. 91-119; Rental costs by occupation for 1900 were calculated by the following method. Only the total number of families was given, but the census divided rental costs into three categories:

a) Rent for dwellings not used as workplaces (ohne Gewerberäume)

b) Rent for dwellings used as workplaces, distinguishing between costs for living quarters and working quarters

c) Rent for dwellings used as workplace without distinction between costs for living and working quarters.

To approximate the actual housing costs, the percentage of total rent paid for living quarters was calculated for category b, and



this percentage applied to category c for each occupation to estimate what proportion was spent on living rather than on working quarters. It was also clear from the data that housing costs were not merely a function of household size. While roomers and boarders in the labor force were listed under their own occupations rather than under the households in which they lived, the extra rent they brought in would have been neutralized by the extra space they took up.

15. Langewiesche, "Mobilität," p. 79.

16. The exact correlations of rental costs with proportion of migrants in an occupational group run as follows:

| | Totals Migrants | Migrants Arrived Within the Last 5 Years | Migrants Arrived Within the Last Year |
|---|---|---|---|
| Unweighted | -0.08 | -0.25 | -0.19 |
| Weighted By Size of Occupational Group | -0.03 | +0.12 | +0.09 |

17. Rental data was obtained from: Die Grundstücks- sowie die Wohnungs- und die Bevölkerungsaufnahme von 1905, part 2, pp. 76-98. It was combined with data on place of birth by occupation from: Statistik des deutschen Reichs, vol. 110, part 2. The two sources did not include exactly the same population since the housing census counted people at their residences, the occupational census enumerated workers and particularly commuters at their place of work. The labor force may have also changed somewhat in the intervening eighteen months, and in any case varied somewhat from summer to winter. However, the differences were probably minor, and the same social and regional groups if not all the same individuals could be expected to be found in a given occupation over time. Rental information was given only for heads of households, but it seems more likely that occupations with a high proportion of roomers and boarders also included a high proportion in low quality housing, than that these two were inversely related.

18. Data in Table 4 on migration turnover by occupation was obtained from Statistisches Jahrbuch der Stadt Berlin, vols. 14-32 (1889-1913). It was collapsed for five-year periods between censuses and set in relation to the number employed at the beginning and end of the period.

19. Langewiesche, "Mobilität," p. 90. Table 4 was calculated from information in Beitr. zur Statistik der Stadt Frankfurt a.M., n.s. vol. 1, part 2 (1895), pp. xxxiv, xlvi-xlvii. The ward-level correlations are also based on data from this volume.



20. The correlations in the table are based on ward-level cross sections from Berlin census data for the respective years; see notes 12-13 for sources. For Munich the source of data was: Mitteilungen des Statistischen Amtes der Stadt München, vols. 13, 15, 20. The 1890 cross-section was supplemented with occupational data from 1895, but ward boundaries remained constant. The category "professionals and civil servants" does not include the military. For further information see Walter Kamphoefner, "Zur Wohnsituation in Berlin, 1875-1910," working paper, Sonderforschungsbereich 164, Projekt B 5, Münster, May 1980.

21. Source of data: Die Bevölkerungs- und Wohnungs-Aufnahme vom 1.Dezember 1890 in der Stadt Berlin, part 1, pp. 34-35; Statistik des Hamburgischen Staates 19 (1900), p. 71; this analysis was restricted to males: otherwise female domestics living in elite quarters and men in working-class districts could, when treated together, give the illusion of even distribution when in fact there was considerable segregation by sex. An index of representation shows how widely a subpopulation (for instance Mecklenburgers) deviates from a uniform distribution in a given unit of observation (for instance a ward). Thus if 3 percent of all Berlin residents were Mecklenburgers, a ward with 3 percent of its population Mecklenburgers would have an index of 100 (the statistically expected); with 6 percent, an index of 200 (twice the expected); with 1.5 percent, 50 (half the expected). On the distribution of Mecklenburgers in America see Kamphoefner, "Transplanted Villages."

22. Source of data: Die Bevölkerungs- und Wohnungs-Aufnahme vom 1. December 1885 in der Stadt Berlin, part 1 (1890), pp. 11-17, 100-102. If the data had been restricted to divorces only, it might be argued that more traditional values rather than an absence of marital conflict produced lower rates of marital dissolution among migrants, but migrants would surely have been more subject to abandonment than were native Berliners.

23. Source of data: Die Berliner Volkszählung von 1885, part 1, pp. 14-19, 74-78; part 2, pp. 106-107, 111-114. The criminality statistics show the number of persons incarcerated (mit Freiheitsstrafe Belegten) and also give the number of persons in the respective birthplace categories of punishable age, over 12 years old (Strafmündigen, Über 12jährigen). The source lists five categories of people receiving support from the city. Orphans and foster children were excluded from these calculations since they would reflect not so much the rates of indigence and mortality among migrants as the fact that there were often no relatives in the city to take in such children. The three categories which form the basis for the tables are restricted almost entirely to adults. Those males on poor relief constituted only one-fifth of all unemployed, but the unemployed were not enumerated according to birthplace. They were listed by industrial branch, but not distinguished between employees and self-employed. The city of Stuttgart also enumerated its unemployed in 1895. Of these, 82 percent of the males and 79 percent of the females had been born in the state of Württemberg, and 45 percent of the men and over half of the women were



permanent residents of Stuttgart (besassen den Unterstützungswohnsitz in Stuttgart). Of the unemployed, 15 percent of the men and 25 percent of the women received poor relief. Württembergisches Jahrbuch 1896, part iv, pp. 58-61.

24. Table 10 was calculated from data in the occupational census of 1907, Statistik des deutschen Reiches, vol. 110, part 2, pp. 2-35. Similar indices for selected cities were calculated by Köllmann from the same data source, showing the same tendency for higher qualification among migrants, but his findings have been generally ignored in more recent research. See Wolfgang Köllmann, "Industrialisierung, Binnenwanderung und `Soziale Frage'" in Bevölkerung in der Industriellen Revolution, pp. 107-124.

25. Charles Stephenson, Richard Jensen, Janice Reiff Webster, "Social Predictors of American Mobility: A Census Recapture Study of New York and Wisconsin, 1875-1905" (paper prepared by the Family and Community History Center, Newberry Library, Chicago, 1978). A sample from the 1875 State Census in upstate New York was traced to the 1880 Federal Census; samples from 1905 in Wisconsin and New York State and City were traced back to the 1900 Federal Census. One of the important findings of this study was that many people disappeared from one census year to the next not because of out-migration, but because of incomplete coverage by the census. A recently completed re-analysis of Thernstrom's persistence data, employing more sophisticated multivariate techniques, concluded that much of the class differentials in

locational persistence were simply the result of age, and that the overall patterns of migratory behavior are more congruent with "rational searches for better economic opportunities" than with the "hopeless churning" of a misinformed proletariat. J. Morgan Kousser, Gary Cox, and David Galenson, "Who left Boston? A Multivariate Logit Analysis," (paper presented at the SSHA Meeting, Nashville, TN, October 1981).

26. Sune Akermann, "Swedish Migration and Social Mobility: The Tale of Three Cities," Social Science History 1 (1977), pp. 178-209. A study of social mobility in nineteenth century Marseille also found that rural migrants to the city were not necessarily at a disadvantage. In-migrating peasants' sons showed twice as much upward mobility as locally born sons of laborers and artisans. And among laborers' sons, in-migrants did better than the locally born. William H. Sewell, Jr., "Social Mobility in a Nineteenth-Century European City: Some Findings and Implications," Journal of Interdisciplinary History 7 (1976), pp. 217-233.

27. James H. Jackson, Jr., "Migration and Urbanization in the Ruhr Valley, 1850-1900," (Ph.D Dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1980), pp. 148-197; for some preliminary results see Jackson, "Overcrowding and Family Life: Working-Class Families and the Housing Crisis in Late Nineteenth-Century Duisburg," Richard Evans and W. R. Lee, eds., Essays on the Social History of the Family in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Germany (Barnes and Noble, 1981), pp. 194-220; Jackson. "The Occupational and Familial Context of Migration in Duisburg, 1867-1890," Journal of



Urban History 5 (1982 forthcoming).

28. Peter Borscheid, Michael Jennrich und Georg Wessling, "Saison- und Etappenwanderung im Münsterland 1880-1900," in Fritz Blaich, ed., Entwicklungsprobleme einer Region: Das Beispiel Rheinland und Westfalen im 19. Jahrhundert (Berlin, 1982, forthcoming).